The apterous aphids were not picked directly from the plants.

At Madurai during a recent serious outbreak of the rice earhead bug, *Leptocorisa acuta* Thunberg, the palm swift, *Cypsiurus parvus* (J. E. Gray) was observed to feed on these bugs in large numbers. These birds were noticed to fly across the fields singly or in small groups of not more than 3-4 hawking the flying insects. Their activity appears to be high in the morning hours and decreased after 10.00 a.m. when the temperature here shoots up even in the months of January and February.

To combat the rice earhead bug, the dusting of BHC 10% and Carbaryl 10% was resorted to at 25 kg/ha. This treatment was noticed to drastically affect the activity of the palm swift, *C. parvus batasinensis* over the treated area. A mean of as much as 318 sorties over an area of one acre was observed over a two hour period of observation in untreated plots whereas the treated plots could account for only 12 in case of BHC and 26 in case of carbaryl.

The observations indicate the possible potential of swifts in the natural control of specific pests in epidemics. The effective action of BHC and carbaryl and the reduction in flying insects is also evident from the counts of the birds hawking over treated and untreated fields.

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11. GOLDEN ORIOLE *ORIOLUS ORIOLUS* FEEDING A FLEDGLING CUCKOO (*CUCULUS* SP.)

I observed a male Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus* feeding a fledgling cuckoo. The oriole and the fledgling were sitting on a *Bridelia retusa* tree and the oriole fed the young cuckoo 5 times within 15 minutes, twice the berries of *Bridelia retusa* and thrice insects picked up from the foliage of the same tree. The fledgling cuckoo fluttered wings, called and crouched each time it received the food. While hopping from branch to branch in search of food the oriole also called repeatedly. The cuckoo followed the oriole when it finally flew away. This observation was made at Betla Tiger Reserve, Palamau District, Bihar, North India on 19 September 1979 in the afternoon.

The young cuckoo was probably an Indian cuckoo *Cuculus micropterus* or the Common Hawk-cuckoo *Cuculus varius*, both of which were quite common in that area.

Baker 1934 (NIDIFICATION vol. 3) does not mention Oriole as a foster parent of either of these cuckoos. Sálim Ali and Ripley 1969 (HANDBOOK 3) mention the Blackheaded oriole *Oriolus xanthornus ceylonensis* as one of the host parents of Indian Cuckoo.

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12. LARGE RACKET-TAILED DRONGO AND COMMON BABBLER

On 8th December, 1979, a Large Racket-tailed Drongo (*Dicrurus paradiseus*) was seen in company of the Common Babbler (*Turdoides caudatus*) in a grove of Casuarina (*Casuarina equisetifolia*) and Shisham (*Dalbergia sissoo*) in Aligarh in Uttar Pradesh. The Drongo was actively catching flying insects but the Babbler was not observed to catch any insect.

I had not seen the drongo earlier, during five years of bird study. According to Whistler (1935) this species inhabits "the densest and dampest of the Indian forest, though it is also found in any well-wooded country and even comes into gardens". Ali (1977) says that it has a patchy distribution, more or less throughout India south of the Himalayas.

The Drongo which was seen in Aligarh was certainly a vagrant because it disappeared as quickly as it appeared. Two days of intensive search in and around the campus, especially in the thickly-wooded Scindia Fort near the University, did not reveal any other specimen of this species. According to Ali (1977) the large Racket-tailed Drongo is commonly seen in hunting parties associated with Tree Pie and Jungle Babbler. However, it is difficult to explain the association of the Babbler with such a transient as this Racket-tailed Drongo. It is unlikely that the babbler migrated with the drongo because the Common Babbler is a resident species and moreover, it is mostly found in semi-arid and dry country unlike the Racket-tailed Drongo which prefers damp forests. The babbler in this case was alone with the drongo though normally it lives in flocks of a half dozen or more. It is remarkable that the Common Babbler made a deep though short-lived friendship with a vagrant which it (the babbler) must have met for the first time in life.

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